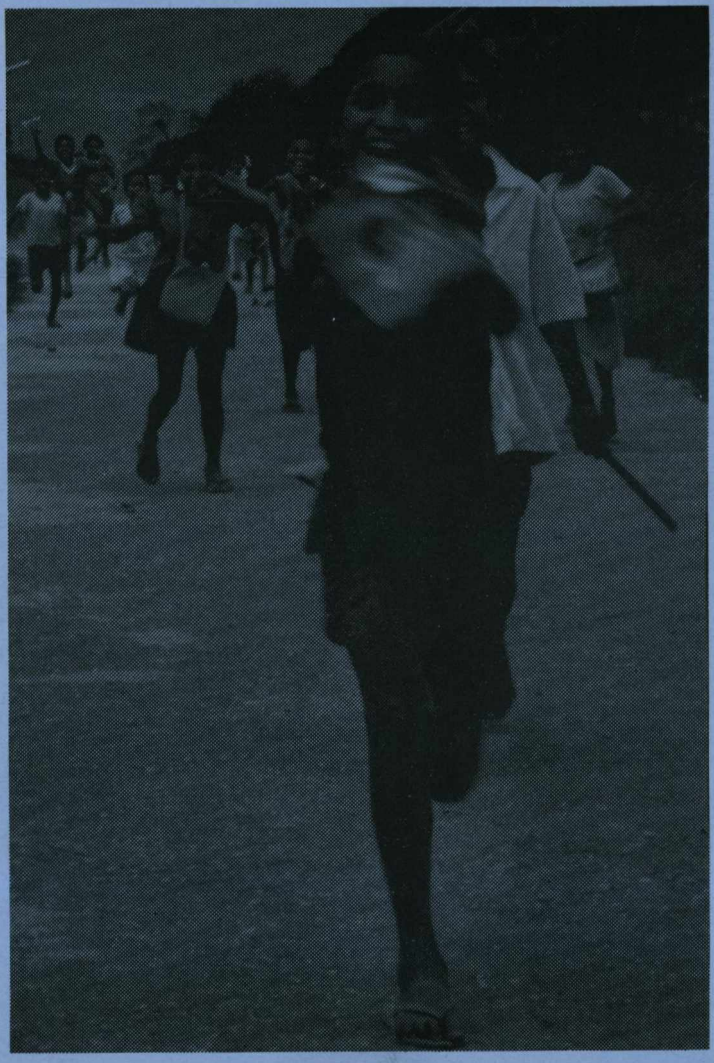
TL25

Hearing on East Timor
The Santa Cruz massacre



Parliamentary Human Rights Group

TL25

Hearing on East Timor

The Santa Cruz Massacre

Dili, 12 November 1991

Parliamentary Human Rights Group
House of Commons, 17 December 1991

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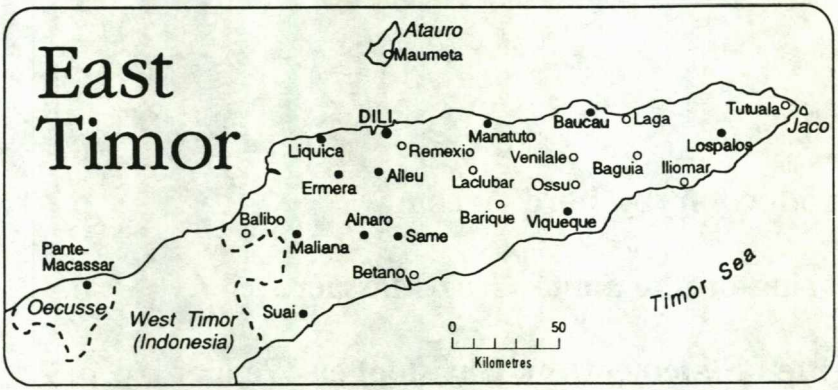
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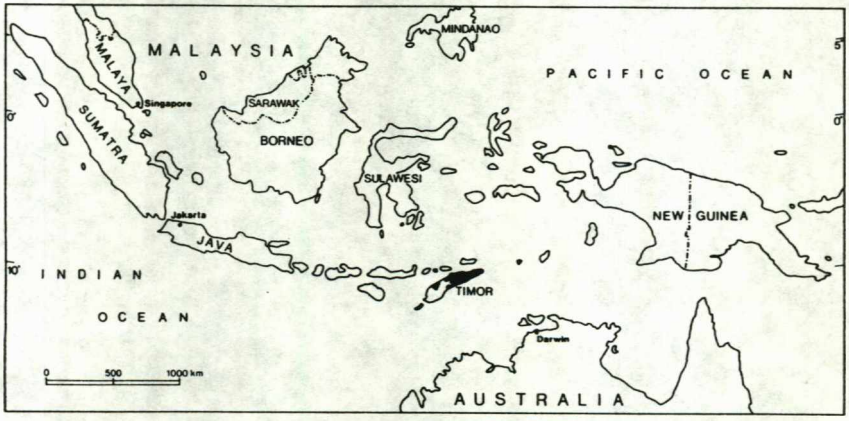
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INTRODUCTION

By Lord Avebury

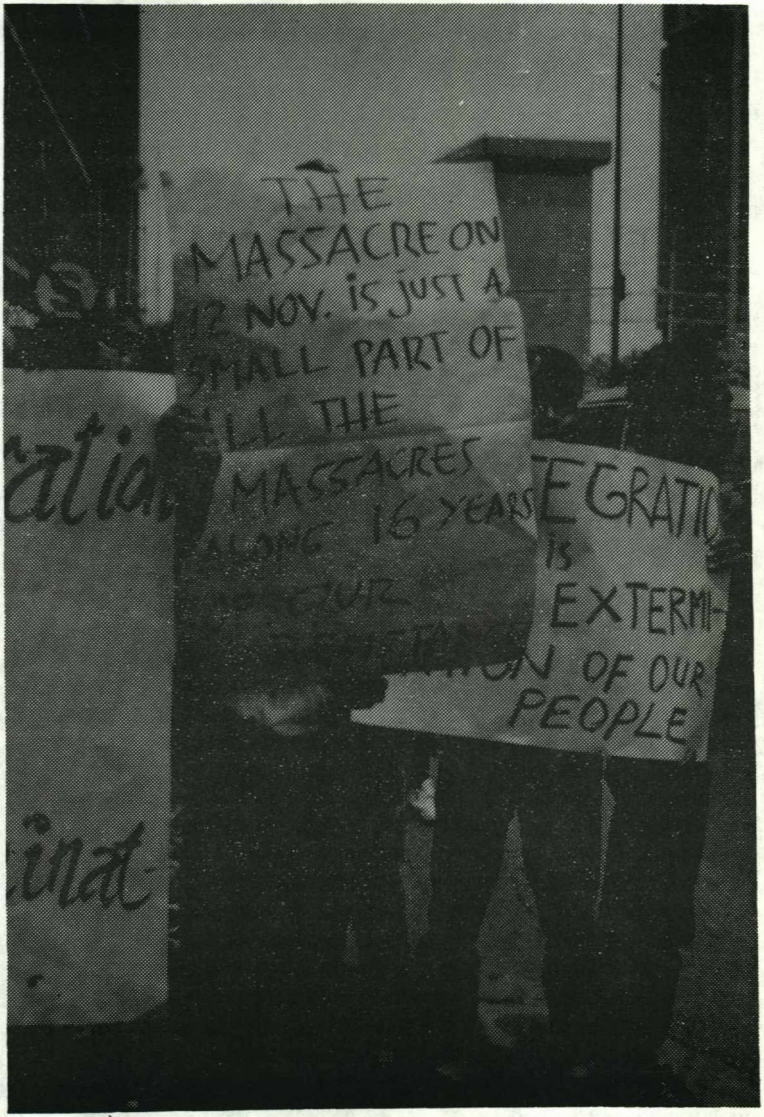
Chair, Parliamentary Human Rights Group

This inquiry, into the massacre at the Santa Cruz cemetery on November 12, 1991, deals with a single incident in the huge catalogue of atrocities committed by the Indonesian forces of occupation, since they first invaded East Timor 16 years ago, beginning with the murder of 5 Australian newsmen who saw too much at Balibo on October 16, 1975. It has been estimated that as many as 200,000 people were killed during the invasion, and in the savage operations against the resistance which followed. Many thousands also perished under torture in the prisons, and even more fled into exile. Yet after so many years of brutal and sadistic repression, the spirit of freedom lives on unquenchable among the people of East Timor.

One of the most striking points to emerge from the testimony we received was that the survivors of the Santa Cruz massacre were actually pleased by what had occurred. The sacrifices of the martyrs, shown on the world's television screens, would awaken the conscience of peoples everywhere, and bring them into the field against Indonesian colonialism. The individual violations of human rights which have occurred in East Timor are indeed among the most horrific of any recorded in the postwar era, but they are transcended by the violation of the right of self-determination itself, which is an essential condition for the genuine existence of all other human rights and freedoms.

The United Nations Security Council, and the General Assembly, repeatedly called for the withdrawal of the Indonesian invaders, and for the holding of a genuine act of self-determination. As time passed, however, the Jakarta propaganda machine convinced many that annexation was a fait accompli, while it suited others to let matters rest in the UN Secretary General's pending tray, while they got on with the business of selling weapons to Jakarta and tying up profitable deals with the aggressors. The Indonesians had invaded and occupied a small, defenceless neighbour and, unlike the Iraqis, escaped any adverse consequences.

The account given here is of a ruthless and cold-blooded massacre of peaceful demonstrators. Such acts will continue for as long as the rest of the world declines to act. It is time for an end to double standards, and for insistence on the same adherence to the principles of the UN Charter as the Security Council applied to Saddam Hussein.



East Timorese students demonstrating outside the United Nations Office in Jakarta, 19 November 1991

PARLIAMENTARY HUMAN RIGHTS GROUP

HEARING ON THE SANTA CRUZ MASSACRE, DILI, EAST TIMOR

17 DECEMBER 1991, 6.30pm,

Present: Lord Avebury, (chair), Anthony Coombs MP, Peter Archer MP, John Battle MP, Jim Lester MP, Lord Ennals, Lord Hatch, Baroness Ewart-Biggs, and Lord Rea.

Lord Avebury (LA): I would like to start this hearing. I'd like to thank you all for coming. I will introduce those who will testify:

Christopher Wenner, a British cameraman working in East Timor, filming for a Yorkshire Television documentary;
Russell Anderson, an Australian tourist who witnessed the massacre;
Saskia Kouwenberg, his wife, who was with Russell in East Timor in the weeks prior to the massacre;
Geoffrey Robinson of Amnesty International, whose work has for many years concentrated on Indonesia. He studied at Cornell University, majoring in Indonesian studies and speaks Indonesian fluently.

I will ask Chris Wenner to show the video he took of the massacre on November 12.

A video taken by Christopher Wenner is shown

[Lord Ennals asked CW to comment. The video begins with the mass at the church in Motael, in memory of Sebastiao Gomes. CW explains how Sebastiao was killed on October 28th by plain clothes Indonesian military who had stormed the church.]

[The video shows the development of the mass into a demonstration along the streets of Dili: the camera faces the flood of demonstrators running past, shouting "Viva Timor Leste, viva!", which CW points out is ***Portuguese*** *for "Long live East Timor".]*

Christopher Wenner (CW): I filmed this, and the demonstration passing the sign for the *[Indonesian]* Heroes' Cemetery, to see if there was any animosity among the crowd. There was none.

[A young Timorese speaks: "We ask you to open your eyes to our situation."]

Peter Archer (PA): Were you afraid of the Indonesian military seeing you film all this?

CW: Yes, I was.

[Standing on the wall of the cemetery, demonstrators are seen waving banners, many

of which are in English.]

PA: Why were they written in English?

CW: These banners had been prepared for the visit of the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture, Professor Kooijmans, who was staying in Dili that week.

[Then, shooting breaks out. People scramble into the cemetery to seek protection behind its walls: some hide behind tombstones, others run into the chapel in the centre of the cemetery.]

LH: Did you see Steve Cox *[a British photographer present at the demonstration]*?

CW: Steve was inside the chapel but out of the camera's field of vision. The photos Steve took there of the wounded are available should anyone wish to see them.

PA: Did they try to stop you filming?

[CW points to a military man on the video who is beckoning him from outside the cemetery. Yet he does not come inside to stop him at this point.]

CW: This is owing to the nature of the operation: highly structured and disciplined. The massacre was obviously not, as the Australian Ambassador has described it, a mere "aberration".

Lord Hatch (LH): I'd like to return to the question of Steve Cox. Was it the case that the military took Steve out of the cemetery and beat him up?

CW: Yes, that's true.

LH: I have questioned the Indonesian government on their mistreatment of a British citizen but they refused to answer.

[The video shows a close up a young man on the ground, his shirt drenched in blood.]

CW: He and many others probably died later.

[In the background, from the crypt, a chorus of voices can be heard.]

PA: Were they still chanting slogans?

CW: No, they are praying. All this was going on for a long while. It took a long time for the wounded to be taken to hospital and this is apparently the reason Kamal, a New Zealander who was shot, did not survive. And once the Red Cross were allowed to get to him, the ambulance was stopped three times by the military on its way to the hospital.

[The video shows the military getting closer, dragging a body off, occasionally beating people. Then it cuts off.]

The testimony of Christopher Wenner

CW: This footage is a tape I buried in the cemetery. About 40 minutes of film, which showed the beatings that followed, was lost. They took me behind the chapel and they held me there, separate from the others that they were marshalling at the end of the cemetery. But they held me there for, it must have been half an hour or so. And in that time I had a grandstand view of what they were doing: they were assembling the people and stripping them to their waist, tying their hands behind their back if they were able to move. If they were wounded they were piling them up and they took them away to the military hospital. This was after a long time. I must have been held altogether for half an hour, and it must have been half an hour before they arrested me, so I would think at least an hour, and in that time they had taken a few of the wounded people from the outside but there were a whole lot more that they hadn't taken. And some of these, as I said, they'd sort of piled, draped over the tombstones and they were proceeding to beat them if they showed any signs of any reaction.

I saw the military officers come in: there was a phalanx of about a dozen, led by senior officers, who walked in, inspected what was being done, and then walked out again, and the operation continued just as it had before. I myself was then taken away to the police station. It was at this point that Steve Cox, another Englishman who was in there – he was in the chapel – was also arrested, and when they took him away they threatened him with bayonets and beat him up. In particular, they thought he spoke Portuguese, which is regarded as very threatening by many of the people, particularly, oddly enough, the local soldiers – I suspect because they feel their isolation (which is almost total) quite keenly, and therefore they are very concerned when somebody can speak Portuguese and communicate. They threatened to shoot him, and in his view, and in the report of a captain, he though he was going to be shot. But the captain intervened. He was taken in a van and he was beaten all the way to the police station: every time he moved his head to look either side he was beaten. When I saw him afterwards he had great big bruises on either side of his cheekbones.

In my case they didn't touch me at all. They took me to the police station and they held me for about nine hours, during which time they tried to get me to play the video tape, which I was trying to avoid doing. Eventually I erased it and then let them play it. And after that they released me, at about 5.30 that evening. Some of those who were arrested – about 200 or so – were also released later on that evening – about 10 o'clock. These were some of the demonstrators they had no record of having been previously involved or arrested for demonstrating. (There had been two or three major demonstrations before:

one of them at the Pope's Mass in 1989; another one when the ambassador – the US ambassador, Monjo, visited Dili and quite a few of the people involved in this demonstration had been arrested, tortured with electric shocks and knives for having participated in these previous events.) Those who had been previously arrested were singled out and held, according to the testimony of one of those I spoke to before leaving the country – I spoke to one of those who was released. He was beaten and had bruises all over his head and his chest; he'd been made to walk on thorns whilst they beat him with rifle butts, and his feet were full of marks from the thorns. He said that they had been cutting people – one of the ways they torture people, characteristically, is by using sharp knives to slash them (I filmed people with scars all over their bodies from this). On this occasion, according to this man, four of those singled out as having been previously arrested were abused in this way, and died that day from the stab wounds.

Of the remainder, of which I would estimate from those I saw being brought into the police station – because I was being held within yards as they all came by – there were probably three or four hundred – those I saw. There is a well–substantiated report that fits with the details that I know of, that these, or at least a number of these – perhaps 60 or 80 or 100 of them – three days later were taken to a site outside the capital and executed by automatic fire into a prepared grave. The Indonesians deny that this happened. However they have been unwilling to let anybody approach the site and there are witnesses who are willing to come forward in the event that they get some protection.

What's more, the site at which this event is supposed to have happened was a site that I was well aware of before any of these events. This massacre did not happen in isolation: it's important – very important – to understand this in the context of some of the remarks that have been made recently, and I could quote the Australian Ambassador Mr Philip Flood again, where he says, "I have seen no evidence that there was any deliberate or calculated decision or action of the Indonesian government involved in this massacre".

Well, I'll start off by referring you to the manner and behaviour of the soldiers that you saw there, and whether you thought they were under discipline or not. But leaving that aside, this event did not happen in isolation. It was part of a campaign that had been going on for many months in preparation for the Portuguese *[parliamentary]* delegation's visit. The people in Timor, particularly the young people, but anybody who had any kind of connection or previous association with any sort of political activity, were under sentence of death, it's no exaggeration to say. They had been told so on numerous occasions – most of them will have heard it personally, because they assembled them in groups, especially all those who had a position of authority: teachers for example, or administrators, local government people, anybody related in any way to any form of operation. People in market places were assembled, and they were lectured, and they were told that if they spoke to the Portuguese, and if they demonstrated, they would be killed. On occasions they were told they would

be sacked from their jobs, and on other occasions they were told they would be arrested, but most commonly they were told they would be killed.

And one of the ways they were told they would be killed was that – and this is a kind of shorthand that people in Timor are very familiar with – they refer to various sites, killing grounds, that are well known to the Timorese. One of these is called Tasi–Tolo. Tasi–Tolo is the place where the Pope said his Mass. The Timorese are very skilful at a kind of visual samizdat. They make very good dramatic use of these sites, and when they have an opportunity they invite people to do significant things close to them. The Pope's Mass was held on a site where a lot of people had been killed in groups over many years. Tasi–Tolo is just outside the capital.

Anyhow, what I'm getting to is that there are three sites at which the graves had been prepared, with bulldozers, and everybody in Timor knew about this, they'd all been told by the authorities themselves, and by the secret police on numerous occasions. Tasi–Tolo was one of those – I mention it because I filmed it, I filmed the hole that was being prepared. Then Be–Musi was another one, and this is the site which was later mentioned as the place where these 80 people were killed. A third one was near a place called Areia Branca which is a very beautiful beach on the other side of the capital, a site where a lot of people were killed, and in this case the hole apparently was dug not far from there. I myself thought I'd tempted fate enough by going to film one of these holes, so I didn't film them all. But what I can say is that everybody is intimately aware of them and where they were.

An Australian by the name of Tony Balmaine, whom I also knew, was within earshot of the gunfire that took place on the Friday, and said he heard it clearly. Now, gunshooting is not usual in Timor, it's very unusual. If you heard shooting, especially automatic fire, it would be extremely unusual. It's most unlikely that he would have heard anything by way of – I don't know what – fireworks, training fire or anything else. In two months I never heard any such thing.

Anthony Coombs (AC): What day is the massacre at Be–Musi alleged to have taken place?

CW: On Friday, the 15th. The 12th was the Tuesday. The 15th was a Friday.

LH: Could I just ask one more question, following up what I said before. Have you or Steve made any representations to the Foreign Office?

CW: No. I had a bad experience with the Foreign Office. Not so much the Foreign Office, I should say to be fair, but the Australian Foreign Office. The day after the killings I was approached by a diplomat from the Australian Embassy. I myself come from ... my parents were British diplomats, so I was disposed to talk to him. So I told him what had happened. He however seemed remarkably

reluctant to pursue the details of the facts in a way that would convince me that he was trying to find out what actually happened. The first thing that he told me and asked me about was the alleged stabbing of an Indonesian major – by the name of Antar *[later identified as Major Gerhan Lantara]* I believe. This I should say is the first I heard of the event: neither I nor any of the other foreigners who had survived the massacre, who had met afterwards, had seen or heard of this event either personally or from anybody else.

What's more, it was a surprising revelation to me because if I was to show you the look on the faces of the people at the Mass before, you would see the kind of apprehension that was on their faces. You could even see it (I mean I knew it because I knew many of these people by this time) there was a determination, which on occasion bordered on a hysteria. But the hysteria that I'm referring to was of a sort of schoolboy enthusiasm which sometimes got the better of their fears. Mainly, they were terrified, and I was told many many times – I have it and it will appear in the film – that this would happen, that they would all be killed if the Portuguese did not come. I filmed them in hiding saying this; I filmed them behind toilets saying this; I filmed them all over the place saying this. And at the time I genuinely thought that this was a little hysterical. I didn't see any evidence of such killings going on.

LH: But is there not a case to raise the responsibility of the Foreign Office towards you and Steve on the treatment that you received?

CW: Yes, not to me: I wasn't mistreated by the police. They interrogated me, and they took away my film, but they didn't do anything else. Steve, yes, I think there probably would be a case. Quite honestly in the context of the other things that had happened it didn't strike me as one of the more important issues.

LH: It may not be more important, but it is one of the things we can do.

CW: Yes. And I want to get to, if I may, what happened with the diplomats.

LA: Before you leave the major, the allegation of his stabbing, do you think it would be a good idea, if the Australians believe that story, to ask them if they would seek to interview him. Or would it be possible for the Indonesians to put up some kind of stooge who would claim he had been stabbed?

CW: Well, there was a man stabbed, because some of us, I believe Russell, were on the aeroplane when they took him out. Well somebody anyway was ... well, the bishop saw a stabbed or wounded major in the hospital. He saw I believe 91 severely wounded civilians and one wounded major. I urged the diplomat in question, when he asked me about this, to be detailed. I asked him where this was supposed to have happened. And this is what rather dented my confidence in his investigative powers, because every time he got to anything specific, he would basically dodge the issue. He said first of all that it happened in a car, and that they had stabbed him through a window of his jeep. I pointed out that

this was rather difficult and I've had some experience of these issues. If you're going to stab somebody through the window of a jeep, particularly an armed major, your chances are pretty slim unless you drag him out of the jeep first. He abandoned that particular suggestion, partly because of that, partly because the place he told me it happened – I won't go into details – but it was a one-way street, and frankly, it didn't make sense if he knew the area. Then there was another suggestion that it happened right in front of the military office right next to the National Palace. It just so happens I was filming that place from two different vantage points, because I was interested in filming the soldiers running into the bases. There was a large number of government workers hanging about watching what was going on. The soldiers were walking towards the base. There was no evidence that I could see of them walking towards a place where this is supposed to have happened. I was there pretty much when it should have happened according to this version.

There is another version – there are several other versions: the diplomat in question even suggested that it happened before the Mass, and I pointed out to him that it would have had to have happened at 5.30 in the morning if that was the case since the Mass started at six. And that they would have had to have waited three hours before reacting. And he said: "Well, er, no, I ... I didn't say it happened before the Mass ..." Anyway, it went on like this, and after a while I got the impression that his interest in the major was not entirely disinterested.

I was somewhat distressed to find that I was approached by a British diplomat at the airport before I left. He obviously was interested in my welfare, and he had found me at the airport having probably tried elsewhere. I was just about to leave. And quite literally – I had no time to say very much –but the first question on his lips, quite literally the first question on his lips, was: "What about this major? What about this injured major?" And at that point I referred him to a journalist to whom I confided the story in considerable detail because I didn't have the stomach to delay my flight to go into the same thing I just been in the day before.

But the suggestion that this was not part of government policy is monstrous, quite frankly. It's not just monstrous because of what happened on the day, whether or not this major was stabbed – and I find it hard to believe that he was before the shooting started – but if he was, it certainly did not suggest what was clearly intended to be suggested: that there was a riot at stake here, or the public order was at stake, or that anybody was threatened by the demonstrators. As I say there were small children amongst them. There were women. They were being led by women carrying flowers much of the way. When the shooting started, they had just started prayers, and the people we saw standing on the wall were being urged to come down – some of them had come down – and they joined in prayers. This had been going on for a couple of minutes. The soldiers turned up, and almost immediately jumped out of their trucks and fired – having lined up – fired straight into the crowd. There was no preliminary at all. No confrontation of any sort. And all the stuff that we could

go into – and I don't want to take the time from the other elements of the meeting here – but I could go at great detail into the kind of background to all of this that had been going on, as I say, in the immediate context for many months before.

But I will just tell you very briefly the story of one man, who probably died on the Friday. He was a man that I happened to film. His case was similar to those of many others that I'd found, accidentally. I didn't find him accidentally, I should say, but I found many others accidentally, whose entire families had been wiped out since 1975. These are not general statements – there are names, dates, places. These are people who are very frightened to speak but will nonetheless take the chance if they think there's a chance of a foreigner listening. And if you do listen, you will hear horrendous stories of how this happened: through bombing – and I should say that some of this bombing was carried out with British aircraft, Hawk fighters, which have just recently been delivered in record quantities to the Indonesians. They were killed in the shooting, in the battles that did go on, and they were killed in large part in cold-blooded massacres that happened after they surrendered, and they were killed in famines, and diseases related to famines, when they were put into so-called fortified villages or camps for several years where they couldn't feed themselves.

LA: May I just interrupt you, because you made a remark about Hawk aircraft, which is of some importance, because when we've questioned the delivery of Hawk aircraft to Indonesia, we've always been told that it is the trainer version, and that it would not be possible to convert that in the field into ground-attack version, even though British Aerospace has said in their advertisements that the plane is readily convertible. Have you got any evidence that these planes which presumably originated as trainer aircraft were converted in the field at all?

CW: No, I'm afraid because my work, for obvious reasons, did not extend to the military, I cannot give first hand evidence of that sort. All I can refer to is witnesses, people I spoke to, people who referred to the bombings and how they happened. It should be said that the principle weapon of the bombings was the American OV-10 Broncos: this kind of slow-flying killing platform designed for counter-insurgency operations. But it wasn't the only one, and it was this weapon and others, which were delivered at roughly the time when the Hawks were sold in the late 70s, that broke the back of the very tenacious resistance put up by the Timorese armed forces in the early years of the fighting.

LA: Were there any British military vehicles used by the soldiers?

CW: Oh yes, many.

LA: Can you describe them?

CW: Well, mainly Landrovers of all kinds. You see them all over. Some of the

people I saw being arrested were carried in these vehicles.

AC: What is the most significant single threat to Indonesia for which military aircraft ought conceivably to be used?

CW: Well, I'm not aware of one, frankly, in the current context. Clearly not long ago you could argue the situation in the Far East was very unstable. At the moment I'm not aware of one. I don't think there's anybody in the area who would be mad enough to invite an attack. After all, the only power in the whole region that has "integrated" various nations, groups of people culturally distinct, independent groups, is Indonesia. Not just in Timor but in Irian Jaya, through the manipulation of a UN process there. I don't think anybody would be lunatic enough to threaten the Indonesians.

LA: I'm very sorry to have to bring this part of your testimony to an end, but I think you should really let the other witnesses have a chance.

PA: I wonder if I could just clarify my mind on two matters which occurred to me on the sequence of things. The first was that obviously some of the wounded were being tended by their friends. We saw one man who persisted. They were taken to hospital about an hour after the original volley as I understand it, by the military. What was the reason that they couldn't be taken by their friends. Was it because there was no transport?

CW: No, those who were not wounded were separated by the military by force.

PA: They were taken away from them?

CW: They were taken away from them, tied up, arrested and taken to the police station.

PA: I see. The other thing that was puzzling me: the people who went behind the wall – and we saw them praying – they don't appear to have been molested further by the soldiers, who as you say were clearly under tight discipline. Was there an obvious reason?

CW: Well, I should perhaps draw a map. The cemetery is a large oblong. In the middle of it was this chapel. The people praying were inside the chapel. I was between the tombstones, and the pictures you saw of those in the chapel were taken from the tombstones looking into the chapel. So they were right in the middle of the cemetery. And because it was an extremely systematic operation, conducted in a very thorough manner, they were going as I say from the outside in, line by line. The last people they got to were those in the chapel.

PA: So they were getting closer all the time.

CW: Exactly. That's why every now and again you hear the voices rising. Because

they're getting closer. I was arrested actually in the chapel. I didn't see what they did to the other people in the chapel. Steve was beaten.

???: Was all that film we saw the one you buried?

CW: Yes.

LA: I wonder if it would be appropriate at this stage to ask Geoff to come in, because he would have a sort of broader perspective on what we've seen, and then I'll come to Russell after that.

The testimony of Geoffrey Robinson

Geoffrey Robinson (GR): I had planned to speak last, and so my first comment was going to be that what I have to say in almost every respect corroborates what has been said before. This is certainly true of what Chris has said, and not surprisingly. The information that Amnesty has gathered is from a variety of sources including many of the other eyewitnesses. I should say that in addition to corroborating what we've heard so far today, it almost wholly contradicts what the Indonesian government has claimed to be the case. The details of the events as Amnesty International has put them together are provided in a series of documents which are available here in these green folders for anybody who wishes to see them. So I won't go into very much detail because I think that's more appropriately left to people who were there. But there are a number of things that I think should be emphasized here about the actual facts of this massacre.

The first, and this has been stressed already, is that this procession was not violent. Any suggestion to the contrary is simply untrue. It was exuberant, and it was certainly a nationalist demonstration of sorts, but it was peaceful.

The second thing is that the shooting – and this again has been emphasized by Chris – the shooting by the army and by the mobile brigade was not spontaneous, it was not the result of some altercation or provocation. It was quite clearly something organised and deliberately planned. It was a military operation. From looking at the testimony of people who were both outside and inside the cemetery, it's clear that the military arrived, got off their trucks – some others arrived on foot – lined up ten or twelve abreast and shot. There was no order to fire. It was simply known ahead of time that this is what would take place. When I asked eyewitness after eyewitness: What was the spark that led to the firing? they all said: There was no spark, that was what was so strange about the situation. It was planned and deliberate.

The third thing that I think should be stressed is the question of numbers. The official figure given by the military soon after the event was that 19 people had died and 91 wounded. A number of sources have since disputed that figure,

including Amnesty International. Perhaps more interestingly, that number has been disputed certainly by all of the eyewitnesses, and also by the governor of East Timor himself and by the church in East Timor, and recently by the Australian government. As some of you may know, Amnesty International has published a list of roughly eighty people reported to have been killed, missing, feared dead or wounded during or shortly after the massacre. I stress the word 'reportedly' because under the circumstances, it is extremely difficult for anybody to know precisely who has died and who has not. This is because those who were killed, or those who were taken away and subsequently killed were buried without markers, their families were not informed. The identities even of the 19 admitted to be killed by the Indonesian military remain unknown after three weeks of government investigation. It is inconceivable that anybody could have the precise information on the numbers and the identities of those who were killed, and that is the tragedy of it. And that is, I think, something that highlights the urgency of a proper international investigation – if only for the sake of the families and people who have lost their children.

LA: Had you had any reaction to your suggestion that the international investigation should be conducted in accordance with the UN Principles for the Effective Investigation of Extra-legal Arbitrary and Summary Executions? Have you put that to the Indonesian Government?

GR: Yes. We've put it not only to the Indonesian government but we've put it also to the Secretary General of the United Nations, to United Nations officials at the Human Rights Centre in Geneva, and also to the Presidency of the European Community. The precise reasons for believing that the Indonesian Commission is unsatisfactory and lacks impartiality and credibility are laid out in those letters. And they are also laid out in a document which was published on the 3rd of December which is available here. We have had no response from the Indonesian government, and we have had no direct response from the Secretary General of the United Nations. But it is clear that the Secretary General does believe that an international investigation under United Nations auspices is necessary. There can be no doubt about that. The discussions now, between the Indonesian government and the United Nations, on the terms of such an investigation are taking place. It is not true if the Indonesian government say they have not been approached. They have been and they have told the United Nations that they will have to make a decision in cabinet before coming back. We have, in our letters to the United Nations, laid out some of the very basic minimum standards which should be adhered to by any investigation. And we assume that any investigation that does take place under UN auspices will adhere rigorously to those standards. We would assume, of course, that a government like the British government would not want to take part in or to put its name to any investigation which did not meet those standards, both as a member of the United Nations, and also a member of the European Community.

In addition to those few remarks I have about the details of the incident, without going into more detail on that, I should like to make more general remarks.

The first is that the massacre at Santa Cruz, was in no way an aberration. It was neither an aberration in the history of East Timor nor was it an aberration in the behaviour of the Indonesian security forces. Unfortunately I am here to say that for the last several years Amnesty International has year after year reported precisely these kinds of violations, both to governments, to the media and to the United Nations: political killings, disappearances, torture and political imprisonment. It is simply not true to say that the human rights situation in East Timor over the last few years has been improving. This is wishful thinking on the part of governments who want to have nothing to do with the problem.

The second thing that I would say in this regard, with respect to this not being an aberration, is that the behaviour of the security forces in East Timor are duplicated, not duplicated but multiplied many times over, in other parts – or I should say, in parts of – Indonesia. This was most obviously demonstrated after the 1965 coup when roughly one million people were killed – alleged communists. It was also true in a period of two or three years in the mid–80s when somewhere between 5000 and 7000 people were killed by civilian hitmen. It was later acknowledged by the President that that was his policy: shock therapy to get rid of petty crime. It's also true until this day in the special province of Aceh in northern Sumatra; here anything from 2000 to 5000 may have been the victims of political execution; others – many many others – tortured and disappeared. I could go on with this list. I won't now, but the point that simply has to be stressed is that this is in no way unexpected, and it can in no way be regarded as a rather strange thing that happened one day when soldiers got out of hand. This is standard operating procedure in Indonesia.

The third major general point that I'd like to make is that the serious human rights violations in East Timor itself have continued since the 12th of November. It is not enough for us to be focusing – although it is clearly a horrible thing that has happened. The killing and the imprisonment and the torture has continued, and I dare say it will continue for many months and many years unless something is done. I should particularly like to mention the allegations of killings subsequent to the 12th of November, and also arrests. The killings of the 15th of November have been much debated in the press, and there is certainly less clear–cut evidence that they took place than in the Santa Cruz massacre: there were no journalists there, there were no foreign observers. But surely the evidence of previous violations of this type and the gravity of these allegations suggests the importance of a proper investigation. If other governments, including this government, are serious in saying they want to know what happened, then it is simply not good enough to say that we will wait for the Indonesian investigating commission. This is the moment for a government like this one or any other to insist upon an international UN–supervised investigation with all of the rigour that that should entail.

LA: Have you remonstrated with the United Kingdom government for referring to the Indonesian commission as independent?

GR: We have written to a large number of foreign ministers expressing our views on this question. We don't intend to engage in too much public debate, and I don't intend to do it tonight. But we certainly would not agree with the terminology. This is clearly not an independent commission. It is clearly not an impartial commission. And it is very doubtful that it will produce anything but a rubber stamp of the version which is presented, contrary to all existing evidence, by the military.

Let me make one final remark in this respect, the responsibility of the international community – what can be done? I would say – it's not unreasonable to say – that governments, particularly ... some more than other governments, bear a responsibility for the continuing violations after more than 15 years. They also bear a special responsibility now to do something about it. It is of course encouraging to hear this government say that it is concerned, but this is a wholly inadequate response. I should also say, as we've just been discussing, the national, the Indonesian commission of enquiry, it is quite naive and it reflects a serious lack of understanding of Indonesian history or politics, to suggest for a moment that this commission of enquiry will be independent or impartial. What can be done, and what should be done immediately, is to encourage the Secretary General, indeed urge the Secretary General of the United Nations, to press forward with an international UN-supervised investigation, and at the same time to encourage the Indonesians to look positively upon those kinds of initiatives from the UN. This approach does not have to be negative. Indonesia deserves condemnation, but they can be encouraged to show their interest in seeing this properly resolved by accepting the initiatives of the UN in this respect. In short I think that governments can do more, and they should do more, this one included.

LA Thank you very much Geoff. We are running rather short of time because there's a division at eight, so shall we move straight on to Russell.

CW: Can I just make one quick remark, and that is that I think it would be a distortion and a bit of a travesty of the facts in Timor to suggest that the principle concern of the Timorese is human rights. This is not the case. Astonishingly after what happened, there were Timorese that were happy the next day about what happened, and approached me and clearly showed me that they were. Why? Not because they were heartless, but because for the first time they had reason to believe that it would get out, outside the country, and because their principle interest in life was to rid themselves of the situation of manifest and continuing oppression. There is no solution to the Timorese question without some form of resolution of the fundamental problem, which is that of independence and anybody who addresses it in any other context, is in my view, if they know Timor, deliberately avoiding the issue.

LA: I'm very glad you brought that out. It's an important point. Shall we move on to Russell?

RA: How much time have we got left?

LA: We've got quarter of an hour.

RA: Well, I'll try to speak briefly for about eight minutes, and then leave some time for questions as well. But I'd just like to say, it's already been mentioned, the reasons why – I'd like to reiterate that – the disappointment about the UN, the Portuguese parliamentary delegation not coming to East Timor, and the UN delegate being in Dili at the time, was the reason the demonstration happened. I'll go straight to the cemetery, just quickly say that I think it's important to notice the liveliness of the demonstration, which was peaceful, but also, right from the very beginning where I stood in the beginning of the demonstration, there were demonstration marshals – all wearing a similar type of t–shirts. They kept saying "Discipline!" to the people to control the situation. At one stage there were some people hitting a street sign as they were running past and people yelled out "Discipline! Discipline!" The marshals went and stood there by the sign and made sure no one else hit it. That happened near the Hotel Resende. And about the major; I can't say one hundred per cent whether it happened or not, but throughout the demonstration Steven Cox and I were in the front, and there were the two Americans, Amy Goodman and Allan Nairn, but they were standing in the middle and towards the back was Bob Muntz, who was not in a good condition to walk fast and run with the demonstration at the front, so he stood at the back. None of the foreign eyewitnesses saw a major being stabbed.

[Saskia Kouwenberg holds a large–scale map of the cemetery, similar to that appended, which RA refers to in his account which follows.]

The demonstration went about three kilometres through the town, and it came up to this place along here (I) *[see map which follows Russell Anderson's written testimony]*, and came down (II); and this is the cemetery wall here (III); this is the crypt that you saw, roughly drawn (IV). And these are houses all down here (V); and it's a wall running down the side of the street here (VI), and there's another cemetery over this side (VII). So the demonstration came down (II). It numbered about five or six thousand I estimated by that time, by looking at the people. They stood in front of the cemetery entrance there (VIII). But most people started to move away at this stage, when they saw military: there was a military truck that I first noticed just here (IX). I saw the military beginning to come along the streets here (X). But most people were moving away, either going along that route, or – I thought from fear more than anything – going in that direction because that was, I heard later, the route that the demonstration was taking. Chris was inside at this stage, filming somewhere in here (XI), and Steven Cox as well. I was standing just here in the front of the crowd (XII), so I was able to see the military. And I was able also to see if any knives or sticks were being thrown. There were none.

I moved through the crowd when a truck drove towards the crowd and moved to here (XIII). And then the military started to unfile. I got quite nervous at that stage, because I was seeing more and more military. So I moved through the crowd, and moved towards the back, and stood roughly here (XIV), still watching the military. Now what I saw was the military come out of this truck and form a front-line also with the troops who were coming round here; form a front line here (XV), and I was standing here (XIV), with Bob Muntz, and we both decided to walk away. Now it was about three minutes from the time I moved from there (XII) to there (XIV). And then they started firing. I was looking back and I would have seen people at the back if they had thrown stones or anything: none of that. The Americans were standing here at the moment and moved later on up towards here I believe. But they were standing between the soldiers and the crowd. They saw no sticks, no stones, no provocation, no physical provocation. In actual fact it was almost the opposite because a lot of the banners that were here I think were down. A lot of the banners were actually less obvious than at any time during the demonstration. And the other thing was that most of the people at the back here started to move away as well: they were walking away. Some people were starting to run already. The crowd moved towards this direction, and some people even walking backwards when the military opened fire. Probably about fifteen abreast on the street here (XV), and it sounded like they all were firing directly into the crowd as the people ran. Most of those people would have been shot in the back as they were running away. I myself could have been shot in the back, because I turned at one stage to see people falling just behind me. I ran with Bob Muntz down here, and I ran around the corner here and through these houses.

Now the initial burst of fire was two to three minutes, but the firing didn't stop after that: it went on and on. I mean afterwards – fifteen to twenty minutes – I could still hear shots being fired in this direction. As I was running through here, it was quite scary, because I thought they were chasing us: I thought, that was it, the firing. But only fifteen minutes away the shots – automatic shots – came out again just over in this direction, so I was constantly changing direction. And it wasn't just me by myself: there were rivers of people running through these houses, and shots being fired off a hundred metres away, all in different directions. And you were running, and you didn't know what was up ahead, whether the military were going to come round a house or be in the street when I finally got down here.

The order to "Don't fire", which I've heard people talk about, seems to me almost the most ridiculous one because I don't know what the commander did after he said 'don't fire'. He must have gone away or something, and let them chase people and continue firing and continue doing what they were doing.

Steven Cox was in here (IV), I think, Chris was here in this position (XI), and Bob Muntz and myself were here. Kamal was somewhere here in the front, we believe, I'm not a hundred sure, but we believe somewhere in the front here in

amongst the crowd. Steven Cox was beaten severely, the Americans even more severely, I believe, after talking with them. I saw Allan Nairn afterwards: he had blood down to here *[he points to below his waist]*; he had a fractured skull. He actually went into a trauma and started to shake at the time – I was told afterwards – while he was being beaten. And their lives were actually saved because they actually both thought that they were going to die. They believe that their lives were saved by a Red Cross person who took them away from the area. Steven Cox said to me afterwards that the man who saved him said to him: 'What were you doing here? You've seen everything. I saved your life.' And then they threw him in the car and continued beating him.

And I didn't see the dead people afterwards, because I was able to get away. But I did drive back afterwards on a motorbike around the area and saw – it was in a large area, possibly two blocks here and two more blocks here *[he indicates to the left of his map]* – and the military were surrounding the top area up here and down to here, and were moving down the street. And I drove along, and around this area I noticed three bodies, and that was quite far from the original area, so they were obviously carrying out a mop–up operation around the town. As I came to the corner, about twenty military came round the corner. Some of them had their guns in a position to fire already; others had them down. And I think I'll leave it there for questioning.

LA: Thank you. We've got about ten minutes left for questioning.

RA: Saskia Kouwenberg was there, and she was not at the cemetery, but she might be able to give a description of the atmosphere of Dili and so on while we were there.

The testimony of Saskia Kouwenberg

SK: I would love to give a little bit of a description of how Dili is to people not well–informed when they arrive in Dili. I can just give a few examples. And I have to be precise. We travelled by motorcycle, we travelled by bus. Throughout the whole country – we heard also from other travellers. There are military. Outside Dili, immediately you have a military checkpoint ... with the bus. People have to come out of the bus: papers are checked, luggage is checked, sometimes somebody stays behind. Everybody in the bus is very tense. We drive on. You always meet military trucks, or sometimes you get stopped because a column has to come, full of soldiers, up to fourteen full trucks. You arrive in a village: you get asked how much time did it take to come here? They ask for your passport again, they try to accompany you everywhere. We saw military with rifles walking in the marketplaces, through people. We saw military in the smallest villages. We wanted to take a picture of a traditional house. Stop! military would come running, and forbid us to take a picture. Bob and Kamal travelled to other places. They were for instance asked in one village by somebody: 'Please leave. Everybody who is seen talking

to you will get on the death list.' That's what is said. They left immediately. So in that village they didn't talk to anybody. It's impossible to talk to people, because you're surrounded by military or police all the time. There's also no conformity at the checkpoints. This is important I think because it makes people so scared. One time this happens, another time they take everything down on your passport, another time they let you go.

I talked to Professor Kooijmans for about one and a half hours because East Timorese people said: 'We don't dare to talk to him.' Professor Kooijmans was surrounded by plain clothes police, as he said himself, all the time, and people from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. They also ask us why we wanted to talk to him. We had to write down our names, our pictures are ... my picture was taken on different occasions. And Kooijmans himself recognizes that it is incredibly hard to hear the real stories. He would only be able to talk to official people.

LA: Does this mean that we can't expect anything from Kooijmans' report?

SK: I think he has ... not about the 12th of November but I think also ...

LA No, I mean generally speaking ...

SK: He knows, of course, also from our sources what has been going on. I'm sure Amnesty International would inform Professor Kooijmans. But really what he saw might be... I will give you an example. At the moment of the massacre he was talking with Warouw, the Chief Commander in Dili. He did his whole day schedule without anybody telling him that a massacre had taken place. I think it was almost as if they were happy that he would leave without knowing it. He just heard it and then went back to the Governor ... to talk about the massacre. He didn't see any of the eyewitness of the massacre. He was not able to do so, and East Timorese people would be very afraid also, because of the way he was surrounded. It's also a warning. Even if an international investigation team goes there, there are a lot of things people have to watch. I think we were a bit lucky also because we were more or less tourists. We travelled around as tourists. Otherwise you would be followed more than even we were.

I saw – and I told Professor Kooijmans – I saw this boy with his father, he was about sixteen. He told me how he and his friend, about seventeen, three o'clock in the night, was taken from his bed to the police station. They threatened to cut their ears off. They hadn't done this, but the boy I saw had a very big cut in his ear. It was sewn by the time I saw it but it was still quite a fresh wound: it happened three days before. And with a razor blade they had slashed his ear and he told me that, with his friend, they had pulled the ear forward, and slashed his ear at the back and more severely than the boy I had seen – the other boy didn't dare to come. The person I talked to afterwards said: I see cases like this very regularly. Arrests, torture. People come and beg for

protection, which nobody seems to be able to give within East Timor. What's very important to me about the funeral – because that's why we actually got more involved, because it happened just after we arrived that Sebastiao Gomes was killed. We went to the funeral. We saw people of all ages.

I must admit that when I went to that country I didn't know much. I knew something, but I thought it was a radical group of young students and some people in the mountains. At that funeral there were three to five thousand people of all ages, and very many older women also and older men and children. And they all shouted the same as on this demonstration, between the prayers, "Viva Timor Leste!" That was for me a sign that it is a broad group. But with military everywhere, life is impossible for people there, and I think everywhere or everyone I spoke to – and it has been said before, but I want to repeat it – that they begged for protection: they are so desperate. I saw many wounded after the massacre, and I went to places where they still were, and they didn't dare to go to the hospital. But also before, they were begging, they told me again and again: we need an international monitoring team. Because in a way also, why investigate the 12th of November? Timorese people know exactly what happened. They need protection. And of course what has been said also, they need a long term solution to the problem. But in the first place, what I saw, the despair everywhere. People now are in danger. I can't confirm any of the reports afterwards, but I know what from I saw in that time, that something must be happening daily there. Also news doesn't travel like in England. Imagine how the massacre story would travel through the country... It would create total panic. And if they say that the soldiers are tense, the people are even more tense. The risk of things going wrong, of explosions. These are unavoidable after what I've seen. Unavoidable. It could happen if the international community doesn't react now, they are only waiting for another incident to happen. But I think it is clear – I don't know that much about the past – but from what I have seen, people are so scared. I think the 12th made it very clear for us.

LA: I think we'd better draw our proceedings to a close, because we literally have thirty seconds before the Division. May I say I'm extraordinary grateful to all the witnesses, for the trouble they've taken to come here, brief us and to also tell them that we are intending to publish a report as a result of these proceedings. The evidence that was given will be extremely valuable in helping to inform our colleagues in both Houses of Parliament, and for us to take action, politically, with our own Foreign Office, with the United Nations as you've suggested. Certainly, we'll take up the point that you made, that we should be approaching the United Nations about the international commission of enquiry and we will pursue the information you've given us to further that process. So thank you all very much indeed for attending.

MASSACRE AMONG THE GRAVES

WRITTEN STATEMENT BY CHRISTOPHER WENNER

IT WAS a cold-blooded and premeditated massacre. The Indonesians, at least 200 uniformed soldiers and police, perhaps a whole battalion, drove up in trucks, took up position and on the order opened fire with automatic weapons straight into the crowd.

The two to three thousand pro-independence demonstrators were nervous but excited as they marched last Tuesday through the centre of Dili, the capital of the former Portuguese colony of East Timor. They went along the seafront lined with Indonesian warships, past the governor's palace and up almost a mile to the public cemetery known as Santa Cruz, waving flags and banners of the occupied colony's independence parties and its continuing armed resistance.

They were almost all students and young people. There were women and even some children protesting against the invasion of their country 16 years ago and its subsequent bloody and illegal "integration" into Indonesia at a cost of 200,000 Timorese lives.

But such protest has never gone unchallenged by the 60,000 or more soldiers, policemen and paid informers who keep the 650,000 Timorese in a state of fear. I was in the cemetery when the shooting started outside its walls, where some 2,000 people were on the street, waiting to file through the gate into the graveyard.

The leaders of the demonstration had walked into the cemetery and made an announcement over loudspeakers that prayers were to begin for their dead companion, Sebastiao, killed on 28 October by policemen in civilian clothes, who were stoning a church where persecuted students took refuge at night. Sebastiao was buried at Santa Cruz, and the march was nominally in his memory.

I was knocked to the ground and trampled in the stampede for the safety of the cemetery chapel. I scrambled for cover among the tombstones and dust and screams filled the air. The scene at the cemetery gate was frozen into my mind.

A young man, badly wounded but still not dead, lay across the entrance. Others had tripped and fallen in the dirt. A solid wedge of people were stuck in the entrance, pressed from behind by hundreds of others desperate to escape the bullets. Then the wedge broke, and the people poured screaming through the gap, trampling over the bodies, the wounded and the whole alike.

Outside in the street, the soldiers kept up a sustained volley of fire, perhaps two minutes long – thousands of rounds poured into the crowd and down into the cemetery where I was hiding.

Then there was a pause, with sporadic fire, and then another volley shorter than the first, and then more sporadic shots as the soldiers moved, in ordered ranks, to surround the cemetery and trap those inside.

Those who had fallen were left to bleed where they lay. This is where the young New Zealander, Kamal Bamadhaj, lost his chance of survival. Wounded by three gunshots, he was still barely conscious when the International Red Cross picked him up. But the ambulance was held up by soldiers several times before it reached the hospital and he had already lost a tremendous amount of blood before they were allowed to get to him.

Then once inside the military hospital, like at least 89 seriously wounded and

perhaps as many as 50 dead, no one was allowed access to him. All information was refused to the Red Cross, to his family, his friends, even, it appears, to his embassy, as he died.

This was not a bureaucratic accident. Relatives of other wounded Timorese who came to enquire about missing relatives were arrested and interrogated. I spoke to some who had fled and dare not go back. Inside the cemetery I saw soldiers clearly commanded by officers in civilian dress, moving methodically between the tombstones, searching out wounded and fugitive demonstrators. As they got to them they kicked them, severely wounded and unhurt alike, with rifle butts and batons.

I was filming all this, ignoring the shouts and the pointed fingers of the soldiers, who had now mainly stopped firing but were not yet, in this methodical scheme, allowed to get to me in the centre of the cemetery.

Several young men gathered around me, thinking that I, a foreigner, might offer some protection. One had blood pouring out of his stomach, another used a shirt to bandage a lower leg in tatters, a third was simply paralysed with fear. He repeated over and over again: "We're all going to die, we're all dead, I'm going to die, please help me mister. You can help me mister, you must not leave us, you must take us with you mister or we're all dead."

But I could not help them. All I could do was bury my videotape in a grave in anticipation of my own arrest and promise them that this time the cynical carnage of the Indonesian military would not be lost in a welter of international evasion and Indonesian lies, as has happened so often in the last 16 years of East Timor's history, during which nearly one in three of its people – roughly 200,000 out of a population of 650,000 – have died.

In this the presence of seven more foreign witnesses may help. Three of these, two Americans and an English photographer, were themselves severely beaten and, by their own reports, only narrowly saved from death at the hands of the soldiers. The English photographer was threatened with bayonets and saved by the intervention of a captain from being shot by a soldier who thought "he spoke Portuguese", a language still spoken by many Timorese but not by the Indonesians, and therefore a cause of great suspicion.

And yet already the half–truths and outright lies issued to Indonesia's friends and trading partners abroad have begun to cloud the truth about this killing and about the continuing abuse of those still held. The emphasis of diplomats from the Australian and British embassies who approached me was clear. Uppermost in their minds was the case of the alleged stabbing of an Indonesian army major, Gerhan Lantara. (As the days go by, another victim has mysteriously been added in some reports.)

I first heard of this stabbing the day after the massacre as a reason for "loyal troops" running amok out of revenge, and then as evidence of the "riot" that official Indonesian forces say they were forced to control. In the words of the official statements: "Stones were thrown at police stations" and "persuasive methods had been tried and failed", then following this, "normal procedures were used to control the riot". Neither I nor any foreign witness or local I know saw any of these events or any reaction to them from policemen or demonstrators during the march (the major almost certainly suffered his wound after the shooting began).

I was held at the police station where the arrested students and demonstrators were taken. I saw 12 trucks with young men stripped to the waist and bound, seated 30 or

more to a truck with the police on the rails jabbing them with rifle butts. During my nine hours of comfortable captivity I spoke to the police chief, to officers involved in the "operation" and to my interrogators.

Why, I asked, had they carried out this barbarous killing. Why did they need guns at all when the demonstrators had none? No one at the station offered the unfortunate major as a motive. No one even bothered to suggest there had been a riot. Nor did they add the more recent assertions emerging from General Sintong Panjaitan, commander of the Udayana military command that covers East Timor. These include the firing of a shot by demonstrators (I heard no stray shots before the attack), the throwing of a hand-grenade "that luckily didn't go off", and the confiscation of "three hand-grenades, six pistols, three rifles, three swords and a number of knives and blades".

The truth, as all foreign witnesses have confirmed, is that there was no riot. There was a procession, a demonstration of exceptionally good order, even good humour, despite the fear and apprehension of the participants. All the "provocation" the military needed was in the pro-resistance and pro-independence banners and slogans of the demonstrators, and in their temerity in demonstrating at all. This is not surprising. Every recent pro-independence demonstration has been attacked. Every time the excuse has been the same. And every time what independent evidence there is and the testimony of foreigners tells a different story.

One such attack, in 1989, took place in full view of the Pope, who was celebrating Mass on his visit to East Timor; another in 1990 occurred in front of the US ambassador's hotel. In the latter case even those Timorese officially invited to speak to him were later arrested and beaten.

And the run-up to the day of this demonstration had been a sustained campaign of intimidation and arrests by the army, "Intel" (the Indonesian Intelligence Service), the police and their numerous hired informers known as "buffos" or "clowns" to the local Timorese.

This campaign was related to the planned visit of Portuguese parliamentarians in November "to gain information at first hand" on the situation in the colony which, according to international law and UN resolutions, they are still legally responsible for administering.

High hopes were placed on this visit by the Timorese, many of whom believed the Portuguese were coming back to ensure a referendum on independence be held and to finish the decolonisation process they started 17 years ago.

Preparations were made in secret to receive the delegation. Over many months, banners were prepared, slogans agreed, demonstrations planned and position papers worked out, in secret meetings among the students and the resistance. During almost two years in the mountains the thousand to 1,500 guerillas "softened" their war and refrained from offensive moves, under orders from their commander, Xanana Gusmao, "to stabilise the situation".

On the Indonesian side, the army doubled its normal garrison and launched a series of sweeps and offensives with upwards of 30,000 men (on the estimates of resistance commanders). The police and the intelligence service hired more informers and embarked on a campaign of quick arrests, followed by interrogations and beatings in an attempt to frustrate the political resistance and turn the victims into informers, dangling a promise of money for information, and a safer future.

They added to that a widespread campaign of threats. On 28 October, the very day plainclothes police stoned the Motael church and killed the student Sebastiao, the *bupati* (senior local administrator) of Dili called three schools together to inform them that anyone who spoke to the Portuguese or approached them "would end up in Tacitolo". Tacitolo is one of the best-known killing grounds used in the early eighties by Indonesian soldiers and death squads disposing of their Timorese victims.

To underline this threat, a mysterious hole, similar to that used in the past for burying bodies, was dug at Tacitolo and at other former killing grounds.

Schoolteachers and government workers were told they would lose their jobs and villages were told that everyone between 10 and 45 would be wiped out. Intelligence agents let it be known that lists were being prepared for torture or extermination.

Thousands of students, former fighters or refugees of the earlier periods of the war – this includes most Timorese – anyone suspected of contacts with foreigners, anyone outspoken, or unpopular for a private reason with local police or their allies, feared being taken.

Sometimes it seemed that almost every young Timorese was likely to be *perseguido* (pursued), or was already on the run. They moved houses, towns, night by night, slept rough, left jobs and stayed out of school in order to stay ahead of their pursuers and prepare for the Portuguese.

And then, because of Indonesian objections to an Australian journalist due to accompany the delegation, the Portuguese cancelled their trip. The students were left exposed, just as they had put their heads above the parapet, and the Indonesians moved in with intensified house-to-house searches, and yet more threats to those arrested.

It was in this climate that the independence demonstration was planned by the political clandestine front and authorised by the resistance commander-in-chief, Xanana Gusmao, to coincide with a visit of the UN special rapporteur on torture, Peter Kooijmans, to Dili.

It was a crumb thrown to the students by the outside world that they felt had, once again, let them down. Discipline for the demonstration was to be tight to ensure no hostages were left to fortune or to the Indonesian military. And although in the event the Indonesians needed no hostages, and up to 50 died in the shootings with more than a hundred wounded and up to 400 arrested, beaten, made to walk barefoot across thorns, and tortured with electric shocks; although four more were stabbed to death in the police station, according to some of those released, and although perhaps 150 are still suffering this abuse, on the morning after the massacre there were smiles on the faces of many Timorese.

This was because the foreigners had been there and filmed the event, and the foreigners, for once, were also beaten up and this, they believe, will be noticed. This, they believe, may lift a little the curse which is worse than oppression and death for Timorese, the curse of their total and relentless isolation in their struggle.

THE INDONESIAN MASSACRE OF EAST TIMORESE IN DILI 12TH OF NOVEMBER 1991

WRITTEN STATEMENT BY RUSSELL ANDERSON

Reasons for visiting East Timor

During 1991 my wife, Saskia Kouwenberg and I had promised ourselves to be in the Netherlands to celebrate Xmas with her family. We decided to have a holiday travelling through Indonesia for two months on our way to the Netherlands. Shortly before leaving Australia we heard, on the radio, of the Parliamentary Delegation's visit to East Timor.

I knew about the situation and a bit of the history of East Timor. The visit of the Delegation coincided with our visit. So we decided to be present in Dili when the delegation arrived.

I had been a radio journalist for 8 Top Fm, a Darwin radio station for eight months, putting together a weekly half hour environmental programme. So I took my recorder with me. I also, like any tourist, took my camera.

Before leaving Australia we got in contact with an East Timorese refugee. He explained to us the present situation and we asked him for names of people to talk to inside East Timor. We also met two Europeans, just arrived in Darwin from East Timor. We met them again in East Timor. We left Australia with no names of people to see, but hoped to meet people whilst there.

We stayed in Dili for so long, 18 days mainly because Saskia had back problems and could not travel. In all honesty this can be checked at several doctors in Darwin. Saskia felt a lot of pain in her back and was the reason she did not attend the mass and demonstration on the 12th of November.

It could also be said we took an interest in the situation of East Timor and found this a double reason to stay, especially after the funeral procession where I experienced the despair of the East Timorese for the world to understand their plight. It was Saskia's back, though, which stopped us several times from taking the bumpy bus journey to Kupang.

Arrival and observations

I arrived in Dili on the 26th of October. It was only two days later that two or three people died at the Motael Church. I heard that the incident started at midnight when people, in civilian clothes threw rocks at the Church. Dozens of East Timorese were seeking refuge inside the Motael for fear of being arrested, tortured or killed. Like hundreds of other East Timorese they were seeking a safe place to hide from accusations of having been involved in past or present anti–Indonesian activities prior to the visit of the Parliamentary Delegation.

Armed with pistols and batons the military intervened on the church grounds one and a half hours later. In the military's efforts to arrest the East Timorese attempts to escape, Sebastiao Gomes Rangel was shot several times, another boy died of gunshot

wounds, and a soldier was stabbed, it was said, in response to the shooting of Sebastiao. Dozens of East Timorese were arrested and some were said to be still in prison by the time we left East Timor.

I attended the mass and funeral procession for Sebastiao Gomes Rangel on the 29th Oct. The procession went the same direction as the 12th of November demonstration. The procession consisted of a cross section of ages. There were no banners on the procession but the same shouts of "Viva, Viva Timor Leste, Independence, Viva Xanana and Viva Sebastiao" echoed through the streets of Dili. No military were to be seen on the streets during the funeral procession, contrary to normality.

I could talk in detail about the military presence in East Timor. However there are already well–documented accounts. I would like to confirm these reports by saying that East Timor has a strong feeling of an occupied country.

Military are present everywhere from the streets of Dili to the smallest village, in market places, restaurants and occupying the most important buildings, I've heard since, there are special soldiers for building roads. I witnessed this several times whilst travelling through the countryside. Armed soldiers sitting in the cabin of bulldozers and graders. Their sole purpose looked like protecting the driver as they sat with automatic rifles resting in their laps. Armed soldiers also stood along the roadside.

During my two brief visits to the countryside I saw a total of 38 military trucks on the move with fully equipped soldiers. I saw three jeeps and three armoured vehicles at one stage blocking our path.

Roadblocks were frequent. I had my bag searched and my travelling companion had all her papers gone through.

As a tourist we took some pictures of the beautiful traditional houses. At one point the owner of a house did not allow us to take a picture of his house because there were military watching by the roadside. We continued 200 metres along the road, out of the military's sight and were greeted with the usual village friendliness as they happily posed while we took picture of the stunning house they had built.

With estimates by the local people as high as 70 000 Indonesian military in East Timor, I could go on and on.

The massacre of 12 November 1991

I attended the Catholic Mass held at the Motael Church on the 12th November at 6am in commemoration of Sebastiao Gomes Rangel's death. Due to the large crowd, approximately 4 000, the mass was moved outdoors to the west of the church still within the church grounds. All was quiet. Open jeeps with military sitting in the back drove by and observed the crowd.

A demonstration was planned to start after the Mass. I believe the demonstration was organized because of the expectations of the Parliamentary Delegation and the frustration felt due to its cancellation. There was also a UN delegate, a Mr Kooijmans (Special Rapporteur on Torture) staying in Dili for 3 days.

With the Mass over, people moved to the entrance way of the churchyard and onto the street. Concealed banners were unfurled and hidden t–shirts with slogans were displayed. No military were to be seen.

As more and more banners unfurled into a sea of waving slogans, the crowd became

vocal with shouts of "Viva Sebastiao, Viva Timor Leste, Independence, Viva Xanana". The age grouping of demonstrators were again mixed but younger people were more visible in the front. The faces of the East Timorese lit up with an expression of life and vigour. Pent up frustrations seemed to be released with a feeling of at last being able to show openly their cries for independence in the hope that the world was watching. I felt a nervousness, a sense of fear swell within me as I remembered I was in an occupied country. I also saw a nervous fear on people's faces as their eyes scanned the streets.

From the beginning organized demonstration marshals were in attendance. It seemed the marshals were a youth group, distinguished by similar clothing. A marshal tried to operate a megaphone but had problems with feedback creating a siren sound. Eventually he spoke to the crowd who were still unfurling banners and starting to move along the planned route.

The march was led by two women/girls carrying traditional baskets of flowers wrapped with knitted colourful cloth. From the beginning marshals joined arms to contain the lead by slowing down the enthusiastic banner wavers who wanted to run (not in any direction, it never looked like a riotous situation: they jogged, ran and walked along the route.) The marshals had a hard time, shouting at people to slow down and having to continually regroup.

I stayed at the front of the march and had a hard time keeping up. In the simmering heat I was sweating and panting. The march proceeded along the harbour side. Ironically, a military ship was preparing to dock. The seafront was lined with Indonesian ships and the soldiers standing in the confines of the harbour looked on with disgust and hatred on their faces.

The demonstration went along Jl Gov. Alves Aldeia (street name) past the governor's house and turned right into Jl Bispo Medeiros. Near the Resende New Inn Hotel a road sign (marking a crossing ahead) was banged about ten times by demonstrators as they passed. Marshals yelled and ran quickly to the spot and stayed there to make sure no-one else hit the road sign.

The head of the march reached the roundabout and stopped (in front of the Telecommunications Centre). The marshals and other convinced a now tired and exhausted lead to wait for the others. The march was almost divided with a few people in between and a larger group, a block away still coming up Jl Bispo Medeiros.

While everyone waited at the roundabout a man, hopping but supported by two others, approached me. I was eagerly shown his dripping bloodied calf and foot. A cloth had been tied around his upper calf. Not speaking the language I could not understand their efforts to tell me what had happened.

The demonstration walked off again as one group. I found myself about 40 metres from the front. I had an audio cassette recorder and people were talking into the microphone.

I had noticed military at the barracks on the corner of Jl Av Sada Bandeira and Jl Bispo Medeiros. Also near the Resende Hotel, I saw a lot of police at what appeared to be a main police station on the right hand side just after the roundabout. They had pistols in their pouches standing shoulder to shoulder with riot sticks at the ready. Every time I saw military or police they stood well back from the demonstration, between 30 to 50 metres away. The police at this "main station" were the closest to the demonstration I saw – approximately 30 metres.

At this point two demonstrators with a large Fretilin flag waved and jumped enthusiastically displaying their boldness.

I walked quickly through the crowd to get to the front again. By the time I got to the cemetery entrance way demonstrators were still climbing the wall for photographers to take pictures of the banners and the hands held high in a V sign.

I gave a quick count as the crowd swelled in front of the cemetery. I estimated between 5 and 6 thousand people. I remembered at Sebastiao Gomes's funeral many people joined the procession at the cemetery. I put this down to the area being more residential and a safer place for more afraid people to join in.

In this residential area I saw a lot of people also standing by the roadside. Some in government blue shirts and others in normal dress while others stood further back near their house. Very few offered a gesture of solidarity or a yell of support. It could have been a sign of what was to come. But it looked like the town of Dili had closed and everybody was there. A lot of school children still wearing their school uniform joined the march from a nearby school. School was coming out or it had closed because of the demonstration. Some children so small reached up and grabbed the microphone in my hand.

As the photos were taken of the people standing on the front cemetery wall, others moved inside to say prayers and lay flowers on Sebastiao Gomes' grave. Again the demonstration was organized. A marshal announced the ceremony of prayers and laying of flowers through a megaphone.

I stayed in front of the cemetery, interviewing people in my broken Spanish. I asked about their feelings of the Parliamentary Delegation's cancellation. At the same time I was noticing most people were walking away (continuing south down the road). I found out later the demonstration was to continue in that direction to Bishop Belo's house and to Hotel Tourismo where Mr Kooijmans was staying. However, I felt people were walking away from fear of the unknown. Of what might happen.

To the south of the demonstration the military were forming. The first truck was about 100 metres away from the diminishing crowd. These soldiers, in what I will call the "first truck", wore a distinctive camouflaged uniform. These were the ones I saw methodically form the frontal assembly of the military attack and they were the ones who created the initial onslaught and deaths. Later that day this was confirmed by the Americans Amy Goodman and Allan Nairn who stood between the demonstrators and the soldiers during the massacre.

Two trucks stopped behind the "first truck". I noticed military marching down the road along the route the demonstration had walked. The second truck, with a roar of its engine, drove towards the crowd but I turned left. The crowd yelled. I felt there was excitement because the military were leaving. They, however, parked just around the corner, started filing out of the truck.

I was frightened by the movement of the truck and noticed most people had moved away. I walked through the crowd and stood at the back. At a quick count I estimated 1 000 in front of the cemetery entrance way. More people were still inside the cemetery.

I observed the "first truck" was almost empty as the last soldiers unfiled and were forming a front line to confront the demonstration. More military were marching down the street and I saw some military peeping around the cemetery wall from the north side. All of these military wore a green or dark green uniform except for the soldiers

in the "first truck". It was clear the military were being commanded into a confrontational position. From the back of the crowd I looked around for the others (the foreigners). I saw Bob Muntz. He stood just inside the cemetery. On seeing me he came out. We looked up to see the soldiers of the "first truck". They were now in three lines about 15 abreast in the street. From where I was standing they looked quite close to the demonstrators – about 80 metres.

From the positions I stood I heard no warning to the crowd to disperse. Not that I would have understood the language, but any shout or order through a megaphone I would have heard and recognized such an order. There was none, not a single warning.

Bob Muntz and I decided we should leave. I had taken ten hurried steps north along the cemetery wall and was glancing back to see the helmets of the military front line bobbing up and down, jogging or marching towards the crowd. The crowd began to walk backwards, walk away. Some were already running.

Suddenly a few shots rang out continued by an explosive volley of automatic rifle fire that persisted for 2 to 3 minutes. It sounded like the whole fifteen in the front row had their fingers pressed firmly on the trigger. They were firing directly into the crowd.

I ran like everybody else. I took a quick glance around and saw people falling. I realised that I would be shot in the back if a bullet lodged into my body. Most people, especially in that initial burst of fire would have been shot in the back running away.

In my vicinity most people ran around the south side of the cemetery to get out of the line of fire. Once around the corner, I scampered through barbed wire fences frantically jumping over tin fences following the rivers of people past houses trees and more fences. I lost Bob Muntz early on as I followed a different path. I was running a zigzag direction going south–east.

My body began to convulse from fear and I was out of breath. I felt very sick and sat down unable to run. There didn't seem as many shots being fired. Suddenly it started again from the direction of the cemetery and some shots seemed much closer. I was up and running again. The soldiers were chasing us.

I changed direction many times as small bursts of fire went off sometimes as close as 50 metres. Others sounded further away. My eyes were wide open watching the reaction and direction of the people running, in front and behind me. My eyes scanned any nook or cranny. I stayed alert for any movement that may have indicated soldiers with automatic rifles. Possibly from any and all directions.

After at least 15 minutes of running I came to a bitumen road. The street was called Jl Belarmino Lobo and I wasn't far from the intersection with Jl Kuluhurr... I was so glad and surprised the military had not cordoned off the whole area. I started walking as calmly as possible down the street. Hundreds of people were fleeing across the road. Not far from the corner people stricken with fear sought my protection by walking with me. One person grabbed my wrist tightly and wouldn't let go, saying "Come house with me". By that stage I was under no illusions that my white vulnerable skin could protect any of these East Timorese. Nevertheless he was terrified so I said I would go with him. We both approached the corner shaking. We looked up and down. No military. We continued down the street.

Taxis drove past and people yelled at them to stop. As one taxi came to a tentative halt my attached companion ran towards the taxi, like about twenty others. The taxi

filled in seconds. People climbed on top, hung off the doors and rear bumper bar. As the taxi drove off people were flung and fell to the ground. This happened three more times as I walked down the street towards my hotel.

Back at the hotel there was no-one. I was terrified, pacing up and down. I waited. Had a shower and changed my clothes that had been ripped by the barbed wire fences.

After waiting half an hour I decided to ride around town on a motorbike. Looking back now this was madness but I had to know what happened to the others. I turned the bike up Jl Belarmino Lobo the street I had walked down. Noticing there were no military I rode cautiously up the street. About three quarters of the way twenty soldiers rounded the corner. Thinking I would look suspicious turning the bike around I continued.

The soldiers noticed me and glared. Some of them were looking in houses around corners and over fences. Some had their automatic weapons in a position to fire and others had them strapped over their shoulder. I thought I would be safe. I'd changed clothes, was wearing a helmet and had sunglasses on. I gave a warm good morning and a smile. The glare on most of them changed to a smile and I motored on.

Turning right I saw soldiers all along the street. It looked like a mopping up operation. They too were searching the area. I noticed but did not stare at three bodies in front of a house about 30 metres off the road.

Upon reaching the next corner I gave way to two military trucks packed with soldiers. I again waved and smiled but the second truck started yelling and pointing at me. The driver didn't stop. Turning right again I was close to the cemetery. There were three speeding trucks heading towards the cemetery so I diverted and went back to the hotel.

Bob Muntz was back. Bob had a wound on his arm. Blood seeped through his shirt. He told me Kamal was shot several times and had been found bleeding profusely in the street. Kamal had been taken to the military hospital. There was no time for sadness. We had to think. We still feared for our lives. How do we get to the hospital to see him? What about the others? What about the East Timorese?

After the Massacre

By nightfall we'd seen each other (the foreigners), except for Kamal, who died in hospital later. We talked about how it happened. I saw no physical provocation from the crowd. No brandishing of knives or machetes, no stone-throwing or stick waving. This was confirmed by Amy and Allan who stood between the demonstrators and the soldiers, by Stephen Cox and Chris Wenner who stood inside the cemetery and Bob Muntz who stood at the back of the crowd, in front of the cemetery.

Stephen Cox had told me how sporadic bursts of fire had continued into the confines of the cemetery for half an hour. The layout of the cemetery is important. It is about the size of a football oval and has very high walls. You would have to be extremely fit to climb over them. The people inside were completely trapped.

I became even more scared for my life after hearing about the savage beatings Allan, Amy and Stephen had received and of the threats, by gunpoint, made to their lives. I saw Allan's (later diagnosed as a fractured skull) bleeding head and his clothes covered in blood.

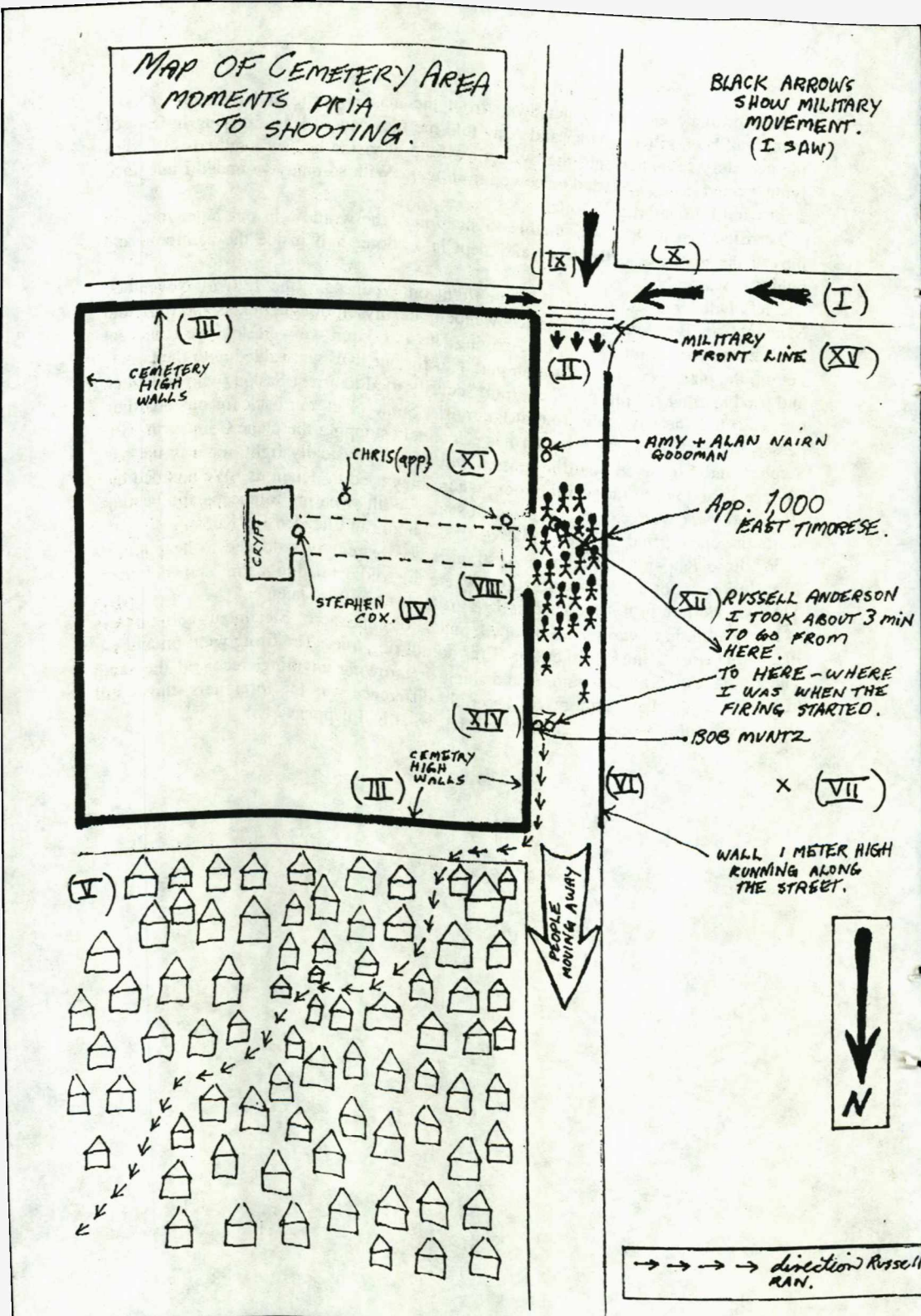
I was fortunate enough to get away from the massacre site and did not see how many had been killed. Allan and Amy told me they saw at least 50 lying in front of the cemetery. Stephen said that within his field of vision he saw hundreds of bodies lying around dead, wounded or cowering in fear. With so many wounded I imagined a lot would die later in hospital.

Terrified that night I was unable to sleep near the window in our hotel room. I moved the mattress to the floor and slept in a corner half inside the bathroom and behind a wardrobe.

I left Dili by plane on the 1.30pm flight on Wednesday the 13th of November. Stephen Cox, Bob Muntz, Saskia Kouwenberg and myself bought tickets and were told to be at the airport by 1 o'clock. Arriving late at 1.05pm we were told we could not get on, the plane was full. Through pure fear for our lives we walked onto the tarmac and tried to enter the plane. The airport security tried to arrest Saskia (who had taken our lead) but she physically fought them off. Some of us ran back for our boarding passes and Saskia stayed on the tarmac effectively stopping the plane from taking off. Stephen and I received boarding passes and had to physically fight our way back to the tarmac and not to the waiting room where they tried to detain us. We boarded the plane and there were exactly four vacant seats. With sweating foreheads and beating hearts the plane lifted off the tarmac of East Timor, and headed for Kupang.

While in Kupang and later in Australia I was extremely saddened to hear reports from Indonesia of a "riotous situation" where the soldiers had to act in "self–defence". This was definitely not the case as I've made clear in this statement.

In my opinion it was a cold–blooded, butcherous massacre. Statements about orders like "don't fire" being mistaken for "fire" do not ring true. The firing went on and on. The foreigners, who were not brandishing or throwing anything, received the same treatment as the East Timorese. The only difference was the foreigners, those still alive, were able to flee the country and tell what had happened.


MAP OF CEMETERY AREA MOMENTS PRIA TO SHOOTING.
BLACK ARROWS SHOW MILITARY MOVEMENT. (I SAW)
(IX)
(X)
(I)
(III)
CEMETERY HIGH WALLS
(II)
MILITARY FRONT LINE (XV)
AMY + ALAN NAIRN GOODMAN
CHRIS (app) (XI)
CRYPT
App. 1,000 EAST TIMORESE.
STEPHEN COX. (IV)
(VIII)
(XII) RUSSELL ANDERSON I TOOK ABOUT 3 MIN TO GO FROM HERE.
TO HERE - WHERE I WAS WHEN THE FIRING STARTED.
(XIV)
BOB MUNTZ
CEMETRY HIGH WALLS
(III)
(VI)
X (VII)
WALL 1 METER HIGH RUNNING ALONG THE STREET.
(V)
PEOPLE MOVING AWAY
N
→ → → → direction Russell RAN.